

# Trustees OK new name for UK dorm

It will be called the  
Wildcat Coal Lodge

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LEXINGTON, Ky. —The University of Kentucky Board of Trustees voted Tuesday to change the name of the men's basketball dorm to the Wildcat Coal Lodge — part of a deal with 21 private donors who will spend \$7 million to replace the aging residence hall with a new facility.

About 20 students and others opposed to the name change protested during the board meeting. A handful of them caused a ruckus after the vote, shouting at the board until it recessed and campus police arrived to escort them out of the meeting.

No arrests were made, President Lee Todd said afterward.

"I think that coal has a heritage in Kentucky that some may not agree with," he said. "But looking forward I think we

are doing everything we can to make coal a positive part of Kentucky's economy by doing clean-coal research, by looking at carbon sequestration."

Plans call for the new dorm to be built on an existing parking lot just northeast of Memorial Coliseum. The current Wildcat Lodge, which houses basketball players as well as students who are not athletes, likely would be renovated and used for housing, officials said.

The new facility still must be approved by the Council on Postsecondary Education and the legislature's Capital Projects and Bond Oversight Committee. Those meetings are scheduled for Nov. 5 and Nov. 12, respectively.

The vote on the name change was 16-3. Opposing it were faculty representative Ernest Yanarella, staff representative Robynn Pease and student representative Ryan



Lee Todd, president of the University of Kentucky

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Smith.

"While coal has been good for the state in many ways, it also conjures up some negative feelings," Pease said.

Yanarella said he was concerned that the new name would encourage other industries, such as the bourbon and tobacco industries, to push to have buildings renamed for their causes.

"The name that is attached to a university carries a symbolic intent," he said. "I think we can and should rise above this."

One trustee, Dr. Charles Sachatello, wasn't feeling well and left the meeting before the matter was considered, UK spokesman Jimmy Stanton said.

Some board members, including Jo Hern Curtis, said Kentucky's coal tradition should be celebrated.

"Coal is what brought us into the 19th and 20th centuries," said Curtis, who grew up in coal country.

UK senior Josey Montana McCoy, who protested during the meeting, said later that including the word coal

in the dorm name conjures up images of mountaintop removal, a controversial process of mining coal.

"I'm from Eastern Kentucky, and I've seen what the name of coal can be associated with," he said.

The 21 donors, dubbed the "Difference Makers," include several individuals affiliated with the coal industry.

One of the donors, Greg Wells, owner of Mountain Properties in Hazard, said "the industry does do a lot for the University of Kentucky and the basketball program and so many other things. I don't see anything wrong or bad about having coal involved in the naming of the facility."

Wells referred additional questions to another donor, Joseph Craft III, who could not be reached for comment. Craft is president and CEO of Alliance Resource Partners, a Lexington-based coal company, and is the largest donor to the UK Athletic Association.

Craft organized the group of donors, Wells said.

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